



Veterinærinstituttet
Norwegian Veterinary Institute



Strategic plan for the Norwegian Veterinary Institute

2016 - 2020

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Scientifically ambitious, forward-looking and cooperative.

Fish health

Animal health

Food safety

The measures outlined in this strategy document will be implemented in the course of the programme period unless otherwise stated.

Photo credits: Arkitekt PG Campus Ås, Ellen Christensen, Hanne Wilhelmsen Giske, Carl Andreas Grøntvedt, Asle Haukaas, Tor Atle Mo, Mari M. Press and Eivind Røhne.

About the Veterinary Institute

The Veterinary Institute is a biomedical research institute and Norway's leading centre of expertise in biosecurity in fish and land animals. The aim of the Institute is to become Norway's centre of preparedness for One Health.

In 2019, the Institute's headquarters will move to Ås, and the activities of its regional units will be extended. The Veterinary Institute is among the most important participants in the development of the Norwegian bioeconomy in aqueous and land environments.

The Veterinary Institute's range of activities

The most important function of the Veterinary Institute is preparedness // contingency planning and competence development aimed at preventing threats to the health of fish, animals and human beings. Diagnostics has always been one of the foundations of the Institute's activities, and today, its core activities comprise diagnostics, research, innovation, monitoring, risk assessment, consulting and communication. The Veterinary Institute is a national reference laboratory and is involved in a wide range of international collaborative activities.

Facts about the Veterinary Institute

History of the Veterinary Institute

The Veterinary Institute was established in Oslo in 1891 as a diagnostic laboratory for animal diseases, and was the first of its kind in Scandinavia. During the 1990s, the Institute expanded to include regional units in Bergen, Harstad, Sandnes, Trondheim and Tromsø.

The original principal task of the Veterinary Institute was to combat tuberculosis and brucellosis. The Institute was subsequently allocated important responsibilities in the prevention of outbreaks of other diseases, as well as the production of sera and vaccines. Today, its activities encompass the entire chain from plants, via animal feed, fish, animals and food for human consumption.

Ownership and financing

The Veterinary Institute is a public-sector institution, under the ownership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The Institute also carries out tasks for the Ministry of Industry and Fisheries.

The Veterinary Institute obtains its basic financial support from the two above-mentioned ministries and the Research Council of Norway. The sources account for around 40 per cent of the Institute's total revenues, while the remainder comes from research projects and contracts.

Partners

The Veterinary Institute acts in close collaboration with public institutions, a number of universities and research institutes, industrial companies and other international and national professional bodies.

1. The Veterinary Institute from now until 2020

Both nature itself and the ways in which we exploit it are continuously changing. Developments in production systems in agriculture and for domesticated animals may lead to new challenges to the health of fish, livestock, human beings and the environment. This is one of several reasons that there will always be a need for the Veterinary Institute's expertise in preventing, identifying, limiting and combatting threats to health.

Ever since it was established in 1891, the Veterinary Institute has contributed to our ability to deal with serious animal diseases and diseases that can pass between animals and human beings. The main elements of our competence-based contingency planning are diagnostics, monitoring, risk assessments, advisory services and goal-oriented communication. In order to perform our social mission, the Veterinary Institute needs to maintain a high level of professional expertise, appropriate facilities and a good understanding of the needs of the authorities and relevant industries. For this reason, we base our contingency planning on strong research and innovation activities as well as a wide range of knowledge-based services supported by contract research projects and public-sector funding.

The ability to deal with risk rapidly and efficiently can be critical. In the future, the Veterinary Institute will continue to help to prevent and reduce the negative effects of threats to the health of fish, animals, the environment and human beings. We will also contribute to profitable and sustainable bioproduction both afloat and ashore.

“One health - One world”

We employ the concept of “One health” to refer to the cross-disciplinary efforts that are expended at local, national and global level to achieve optimal health conditions for people, animals and the environment. The “One health” concept recognises that human health is closely interwoven with the

health of both animals and the environment. The Veterinary Institute has worked on both animal and human health and has helped to deal with environmental challenges. The fact that the Institute has incorporated the “One health” concept into its vision makes it clear that the tradition will be carried on and reinforced in the future.

Outbreaks and the spread of diseases and infections often have complex causes. These can include changes in how society is evolving, methods of operation in aquaculture and livestock farming, commerce, travel and climate. The challenges involved are often global in scope. Avian flu, Ebola, tuberculosis, African swine fever, rabies and resistance to antibiotics are all examples of threats to health that are global in nature and need to be tackled through international collaboration and interdisciplinary efforts.

The Veterinary Institute will participate in preventing and combatting global health challenges. Through high-quality research and innovation we will develop relevant new expertise, which will ensure that we have the ability to provide knowledge-based advice to the authorities and industry at national and international level.

A new epoch

After more than 100 years at Adamstua, the Oslo part of the Veterinary Institute will move to new facilities at Ås in 2019. The transfer, and the task of continuing to develop the Institute's regional units, are the two most important individual matters that the Veterinary Institute will deal with between 2016 and 2020.

Establishing a modern new unit involves a fantastic boost for our activities. The new veterinary medicine groups at Ås will be exemplars in the fields of biosecurity, prevention of spread of disease, and use of technology. Together with other knowledge-based institutions, the Veterinary Institute will develop a

leading competence cluster in bioeconomics and biomedicine. The new facilities will provide a unique possibility to fulfil our social mission, which is to provide good preparedness based on research-based knowledge, so that the authorities and industry can protect lives and material assets to the best of their ability.

Our regional units have great potential for development by cooperating with other knowledge-based centres in their vicinity. Through support for local industries, the regional units will contribute to sustainable and profitable industrial development, in addition to helping to strengthen our national ability to deal with threats to health. The Veterinary Institute must be capable of collaborating and acting in concert both internally and with its scientific partners world-wide, if it is to be able to solve the problems of society in the years to come.

Grasping the possibilities

We are proud that we work at the Veterinary Institute. What we do is important for society. We are a central participant in society and intend to play a leading role in contingency planning for threats to health in the blue, green and red sectors, i.e. infections and diseases capable of affecting water- and land-based organisms, as well as human beings and the environment.

Good contingency planning is based on high-quality research and innovation combined with active knowledge-based support for the authorities and industry. Together with research and innovation, contract-based projects for the authorities and industry are the pillars of development of our knowledge-based contingency planning.

If we are to develop, we must grasp the possibilities that lie to hand in a society characterised by internationalisation and growing competition. Success in such development depends on cooperating with



other scientific groups that broadens our expertise, and that themselves benefit from our collaboration with them. Successful collaboration is a function of professional exchanges, critical dialogue and communication based on mutual confidence.

To reach our goals, we must navigate in accordance with our values. The basic values of the Veterinary Institute provide a platform that offer security on a constant basis. We aim to be professionally ambitious, willing to cooperate, and forward-looking in our work and in how we present ourselves. Our unique range of expertise, our history and the potential of our new scientific profile at Ås and in the regions, give the Veterinary Institute a solid platform to perform our social mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gudmund Holstad'.

*Gudmund Holstad
Managing director
Norwegian Veterinary Institute*

2. Our social mission

- *The Veterinary Institute is Norway's leading knowledge provider for national contingency planning in the fields of fish and animal health, animal welfare and animal feed and human food security. The Institute is an important social factor that helps to reveal and repel threats to health shared by animals and human beings ("One Health")*
- *The Veterinary Institute cooperates with the authorities and industry in developing a sustainable bioeconomy in Norway.*
- *The Veterinary Institute plays a free and independent role in all its scientific concerns.*



3. Basic values, vision and main objectives

Basic values:

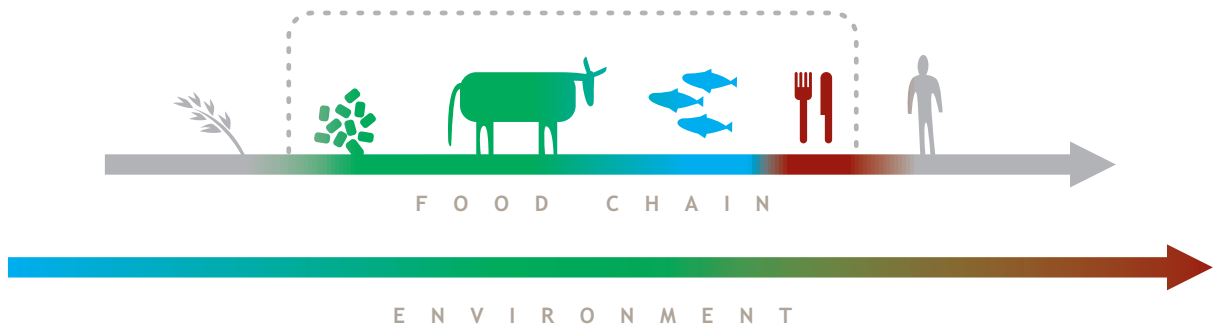
Our values can be expressed in the following terms: scientifically ambitious, forward-looking and cooperative.

Visjon:

We are the contingency planning and competence hub for One Health.

Main objectives:

We will work for good fish and animal health, animal welfare, human health and sustainable bioproduction. We will achieve this through a forward-looking, scientifically ambitious and cooperative organisation that delivers diagnoses, research, innovation, monitoring, risk assessment, consulting and communication services.



4. Contingency planning

Objective: We will help to ensure that threats to health are identified rapidly and will give the authorities, industry and the general public high-quality knowledge-based advice regarding the prevention and handling of crises.

4.1. Knowledge support for the authorities

Objective: We will be the authorities' preferred advisor and supplier of knowledge in the fields of fish and animal health, animal welfare and food safety.

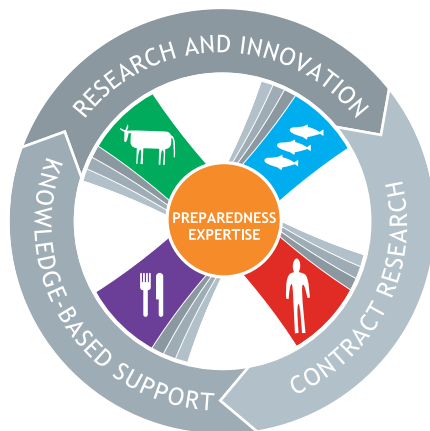
We will achieve this by:

- modernising our contingency planning
- further developing our biosafety expertise in the green and blue sectors
- establishing interdisciplinary teams to identify the causes of new diseases, and to supply advice about the prevention, spread and combatting of outbreaks of disease.
- actively adopting new technology
- using modern, quality-assured diagnostic methods to identify serious diseases
- enhancing electronic information systems for laboratory tests (PJS)
- appointing two new coordinators to strengthen our contingency planning and our functions as a national reference laboratory.



4.2 Research and innovation

Objective: We will utilise research and innovation to support our knowledge-based contingency planning, and contribute to sustainable wealth creation.



We will achieve this by:

- strengthening the scope and quality of our research and innovation in collaboration with other research institutions, industry and the authorities
- increasing our income derived from research by at least 50 per cent between 2014 and 2018
- increasing the amount of international research cooperation and leading at least two research projects in the European Union's Horizon 2020 programme
- building up dynamic research groups in priority areas. The organisation of the research groups and the criteria for their evaluation will be finalised in the course of 2016
- achieving a classification of "very good" in the Research Council of Norway's next evaluation of bioscience research
- revising and implementing our research strategy and assessing the need for an innovation strategy.



4.3. Contract research

Objective: We will be our project sponsors' preferred supplier of services in the blue and green sectors.

We will achieve this by:

- developing and implementing business plans for services in the blue and green sectors
- professionalising the commercial operations and marketing of the Institute's knowledge services and deliveries
- offering improved services through the use of new technology
- modernising and adapting the operation of our monitoring programmes to the needs of our clients.
- establishing interdisciplinary teams that will provide services in fish health at international level
- establishing customer-friendly Internet-based solutions for the simple and reliable delivery of analytical and sample results to our customers.

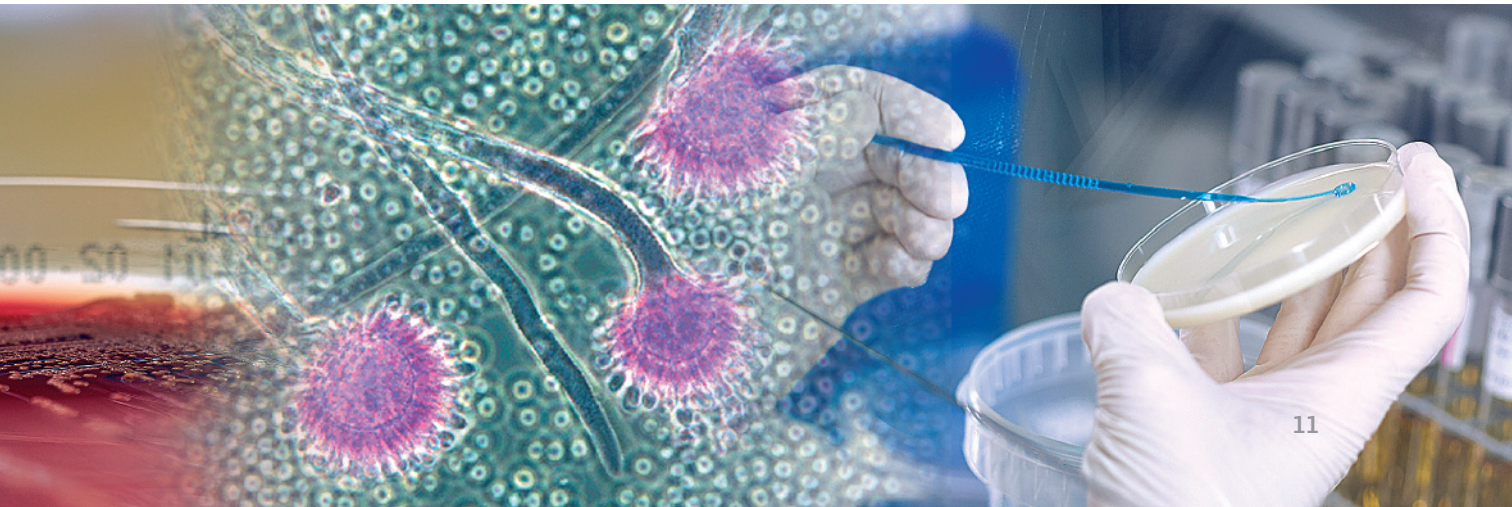


5. Communication and social outreach

Objective: We will deliver relevant, up-to-date knowledge.

We will achieve this by:

- using communication and brand development in support of our establishment at Ås
- supporting the development of our regional units' role vis-à-vis local and regional industry
- improving exchanges of knowledge and collaboration with the authorities and industry
- establishing a new, user-friendly Norwegian website and a research-oriented English-language site, and using social media
- strengthen the communication of research to meet the needs of our users
- encouraging our staff to actively profile our scientific knowledge in social debate arenas
- continuing to develop crisis communication as a facet of our contingency response
- strengthening internal communication, cooperation and solidarity throughout our organisation.



6. Development and governance of the organisation

Objective: Objective: We will be an attractive workplace for forward-looking, collaborative and professionally ambitious colleagues.

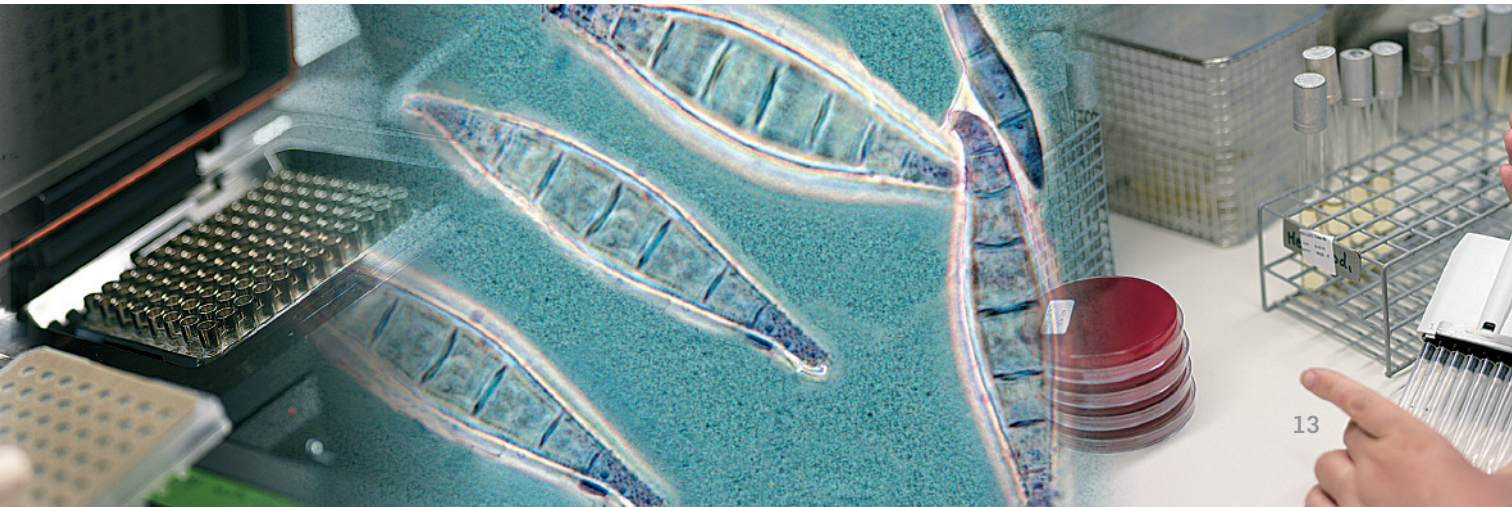
We will achieve this by:

- developing our organisation's culture and adapting its structure to enable us to perform our work efficiently and with high quality
- making continuous efforts to develop governance and management functions throughout the organisation
- planning and implementing our establishment at Ås in such a way that the competence and capacity of the whole organisation is strengthened
- specialising and improving the efficiency of our regional units' support of regional industry in collaboration with other regional centres of expertise
- increasing our profiling efforts vis-à-vis international fora and encourage our colleagues to contribute actively to global knowledge generation
- raising the rate of digitalisation and the use of ICT in work-processes and in the renewal of the organisation
- encouraging dynamic processes in research groups, for example by developing our personnel and recruitment policies
- enabling and expecting our colleagues to develop their own fields of expertise.





Illustration of the new head office under construction south of Oslo.



7. Definitions

Contingency planning is the planning and preparation of measures designed to limit or deal optimally with crises or other undesirable events (see: NOU 2000:24 Et sårbart samfunn og NOU 2006:6 Når sikkerheten er viktigst).

Biosecurity is a system of measures (i.e. input factors, movements and other activities), each with a set of procedures which in combination minimise the risk of introducing and spreading infectious organisms within or between populations.

The bioeconomy has been defined by the European Union as the sustainable production and transformation of biomass into food, health-oriented and fibrous products, industrial products and energy (http://www.forskningsradet.no/prognett-naturognaering/Nyheter/Nye_biotek_og_bionringsprogrammer/1253969019047?lang=no).

The blue, green and red sectors are expressions often used to refer to marine life (blue sector), life on land (green sector) and human health and the environment (red sector).

Diagnostics refers to the identification and classification of a condition based on background and objective findings (Store medisinsk leksikon: <https://sml.snl.no/diagnostikk>).

“One health” has been defined as a set of efforts made across a number of disciplines - local, national and global - aimed at achieving optimal health for humans, animals and the environment. (The American Veterinary Medical Association. One Health Initiative Task Force. One Health: A New Professional Imperative. July 15, 2008, our translation).

Innovation refers to “a new product, a new service, a new production process, application or form of organisation that has been launched on the market or brought into production in order to create value” (<http://definisjoner.no/innovasjon>).

Hub is incorporated into the expression “contingency and competence hub” in our vision, in the sense of the centre of a wheel or core of a network.



Contract, in our context, refers to knowledge-based services that make up a part of monitoring programmes for the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and other parts of the administration, as well as diagnostic services for industry.

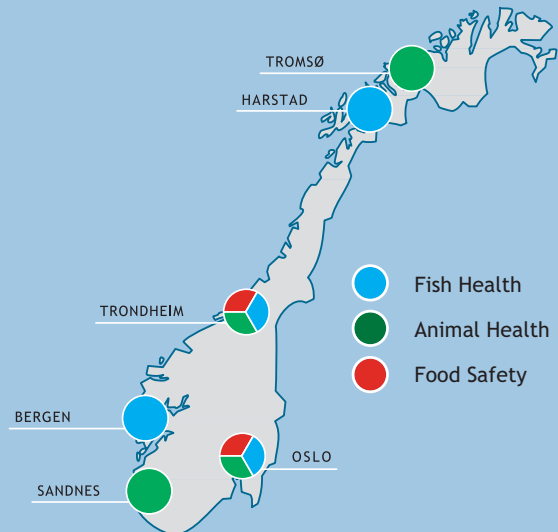
Monitoring is the systematic collection of data about a particular topic, such as the state of health of animals or human beings. Health monitoring is defined as obtaining ongoing oversight of the extent and development of a health condition and circumstances that affect health.

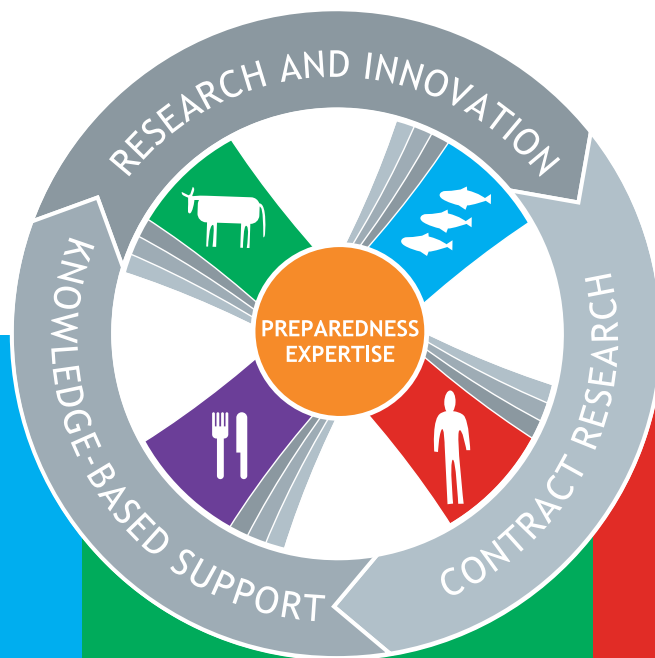
(Grøholt, E.K. m. fl. Hva vil det si å overvåke befolkningens helse? Tidsskrift Norske Legeforening 2008; 128:2470 – 1).

Risk assessment: Science-based evaluation of the probability of injury, damage or disease impacting fish, animals, humans or the environment, the degree of seriousness of potential consequences of the damage, and the uncertainty surrounding such considerations.

(http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health_standards/tahc/2010/en_glossaire.htm)

The Main Office of the Institute has been located at Adamstuen in Oslo since 1914. In 2019 it will move to new facilities at Ås south of Oslo. The five regional units are placed along the coast of Norway, here marked with colours to symbolize their sector of work.





Fish Health



Animal Health



Food Safety



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